

SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB BULLETIN

OFFICIAL ORGAN OF THE SAINT LOUIS BIRD CLUB
for the
Enjoyment, Study, and Conservation of Birds

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Number 7

The Horseshoe Lake Field Trip

On November 7th, the Bird Club had an afternoon field trip at Horseshoe Lake, near Granite City, Ill. Miss L. R. Ernst directed various groups to particular spots of interest for birds about the lake.

Although it was a fine, sunny afternoon, there was rather a scarcity of birds on the water. This was undoubtedly due to the numbers of duck hunters in the region that day, and to the fact that the large flocks of waterfowl which had been present a short time previously had moved southward, while the next wave had not yet come in from the north.

Nevertheless, there were 44 species recorded for the day, notable among them being the very late date for Greater Yellowlegs, and the sight of the rather unusual Bufflehead.

Attendance was exceptionally good, there being about 50 people on the trip, representing the Bird Club as well as the St. Louis Nature Study Society and the Webster Groves Nature Study Society. T.K.

Christmas Bird Count

The annual winter bird count for the St. Louis area will be made by St. Louis Bird Club members on Saturday and Sunday, December 25th and 26th. Details of plans will be sent to members in the December bulletin.

Birdbanding

Birdbanding, by means of numbered bands, provides a method of studying living birds of all kinds. Scientific banding dates back to 1809, when a Danish Schoolmaster, H.Ch.C. Mortensen, commenced systematically to band storks, teals, starlings, and two or three species of birds of prey.

His success at once attracted the attention of European ornithologists, and it was not long before the birdbanding work came into prominence. At the present time banding is being actively conducted in North America as well as in England, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, Russia, Iceland, Germany, Holland, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Hungary, Bulgaria, India, Morocco, and Japan.

In America, the possibilities of the method were first brought to the attention of ornithologists by Dr. Leon J. Cole in 1902, and after the prosecution of a few more or less individual projects and one or two more ambitious attempts, the American Birdbanding Association was organized in December 1909.

This organization, with the aid of a few enthusiastic workers, and the Linnaean Society of New York, continued to develop the work until 1920, when, having outgrown the resources available it was taken over by the Biological Survey.

Birdbanding in North America is under the general direction of the Bureau of Biological Survey, United States Department of Agriculture in cooperation with the National Parks Branch, Canadian Department of the Interior. In the United States the Migratory Bird Treaty Act
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BULLETIN

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Jack Miner At 71

Jack Miner celebrated his 71st birthday on April 10th.

The Jack Miner bird sanctuary has become known throughout the world as a place of safety for migratory waterfowl, but little has been said regarding its being largely responsible for saving the Bob-White quail from extermination in Ontario.

Some fifty years ago, when Jack Miner hunted quail, he would always save his wing-tipped birds and bring them to his home; and each year these birds would nest and their eggs were placed under bantam hens, hatched and reared by the bantam mothers, and liberated throughout the county by Jack Miner, in his own time and at his own expense. Jack Miner has photos in his possession, which were taken in his back yard over thirty years ago, with Bob-White quail sitting on his hands and lap. He was so successful in raising them with bantams and keeping the county stocked, that whenever a farmer, while cutting hay, would mow over a quail's nest and injure the mother quail, rather than let the crows eat the eggs or allow them to rot in the sun, he co-operated and brought

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Riplettes

Some species of parrots have a gall bladder while others do not.

The Louisiana Water-thrush has been described as the shyest of all the warblers.

The Ostrich has a Digestive tube over forty-six feet long while the same structure in a hummingbird has a length of only two inches.

The intestinal folds of a goose run mainly with the long axis of the bird while those in a gull are mainly coiled like a watch spring.

Usually during spring migration the farther north a warbler gets, the greater the number of miles it covers per day.

The Secretary bird, our native Road-runner, and certain Sea-eagles consider snakes as the choicest bit of their daily diet.

Birds have three eyelids. The third lid can completely cover the eyeball if necessary. The two other lids when closing are arranged so that the lower lid comes up to meet the upper one.

A Palm Warbler has been known to eat 9,500 insects in 4 hours and to take as many as 60 insects per minute.

A.M.

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708 stomachs can't be wrong!

Below is an analysis of the stomach contents of 708 Red-shouldered Hawks.

Insects	35%
Snakes, Frogs	20%
Mice, Shrews	28%
Other mammals, (squirrels etc.)	9%
Birds	5%
Poultry & game birds	2%
Miscellaneous	1%

If a man in a certain town is found to be a thief, would you put every person in the community in jail? Then, is it fair and reasonable to condemn all Hawks, when only a few individuals succumb to temptation and get in the habit of feeding on chickens or game birds?

Mrs. Bowick Stayed at Homo
One day Mr. Clarence Turner who lives five miles from Steelville, saw a wren fly from under his car when he started to town. Investigating he found her nest on the rear axle. Since there was no way of avoiding the trip that day he drove away while Mrs. Bowick sat on the fence. Mr. Turner hurried back with faint hopes that she would claim the nest, but she did.

While laying and hatching continued, Mr. Turner avoided using the car as much as possible, however numerous trips had to be made. Each time he started, she flew off and waited for her nest to return, then claimed her home and settled down persistently until the eggs were hatched. He nailed a box to the tree with the open side out and transferred the nest and young ones, wondering if she would know her own.

And She Did.

- - - Cora Shoop.
(Jack Miner at 71)

the eggs to Jack Miner, and what is the result? Jack Miner has raised quail each year and liberated from 50 to 250 throughout the county each season, and for over 30 years the hunters of this generation have benefited from the arrangements.
(From Canadian Forest and Outdoors.)

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Winthrop Packard

For Twenty-four years Mr. Packard has been Secretary-Treasurer of the Massachusetts Audubon Society. He has been editor of the Bulletin of the Massachusetts Audubon Society since its first issue in February 1917.

Mr. Packard retires from his duties with the Massachusetts Audubon Society on October 15.

In consideration for his loyal support of the Society its Board of Directors have voted a pension to him.

He will be succeeded by Mr. Carl W. Buchheister.

(Birdbanding)

authorizes this function among other investigations for the protection of migratory birds.

It is the opinion of Professional ornithologists over the entire world that birdbanding is now one of the most important methods available for developing accurate information relating to the living bird.

The study of bird migration is the principal subject served and in this field the contribution of banding data is invaluable, not only from its increase in our scientific knowledge, but also from an administrative viewpoint in the conservation of an important wildlife resource. By the study banding records, new features in the periodic movements of birds are constantly being discovered. One of the most outstanding of these discoveries is the "flyway system", with its many migration routes used by North American migratory waterfowl and probably by most other species of migratory birds.

Important scientific studies² of sex ration, longevity, temperature control, plumage avian psychology, homing instinct and many other problems have been and are being made by the banding method. As a means of conducting precise investigations of the movements and behavior of our native birds, banding stands supreme. During the first 15 years after the work was taken over by the Survey in 1920, nearly 2,250,000 birds were banded, and the number of returns or recovery records reported in that period was nearly 200,000.

All kinds of native birds are studied by the banding method, and there are not many species of the entire North American list of 768 that have not been banded in at least small numbers, while the banded individuals of some species number tens of thousands.

During 1936 a total of 274,695 birds were reported banded

and 18,268 returns were received. The largest number of individual species of birds banded and reported during the fiscal year 1936 were Common Tern, 23,429; Herring Gull, 19,298; Junco, 18,054; White-throated Sparrow, 15,344; and Mallard duck, 14,526.

Species new to the lists of banded birds are the Wondering Tattler, the Arizona Crested Flycatcher, the Large-billed Sparrow, and the Plumbeous Gnatcatcher.

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Bird Protection Abroad

The International Committee for Bird Preservation, T. Gilbert Pearson, LL.D., Chairman, 1775 Broadway, New York City, is eager to gather all possible information regarding bird-protection in other countries. Dr. Pearson asks all who have travelled abroad to advise him regarding their observations on bird protection conditions. "The work in Continental Europe", he says, "is centralized in the Brussels office of the Secretariat, and in like manner the countries of the British Empire are connected with the London office. In New York, we are now working especially with the West Indies, Central America, and South America. Within the past few months we have learned that in most of the countries to the south of us almost no attention is paid to bird protection. Great numbers of our birds, including twenty-one species of ducks, many song birds, and virtually all of our more important shore birds, pass the winter south of us. We cannot hope to rebuild our North American bird supply without the aid of these southern neighbors which are doing no more for the protection of birds than was being done in the United States forty years ago."

The Fourth Bulletin of the International Committee for Bird Preservation will gladly be furnished upon request to Dr. T. Gilbert, 1775 Broadway, New York City, U.S.A.

(Massachusetts Audubon Bulletin)

CALCULUS

The more they kill

Why the more there are,

As easy to pencil

As golf at par,

If a million ducks

Fly south in fall,

By slaughtering half

You will save them all.

We learned the trick

From a hunter true.

Who assures us that one

Minus one leaves two. . .

Bird Lore

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Things to Think About

For a number of years the numbers of ducks have been going down. Do you think the fact that the number of licensed gunners has sky-rocketed during the same period has anything to do with it?

Several species of American birds are now extinct.

There is nothing we can do to bring them back.

They could have been saved.

Are we going to let the Ducks follow the Dodo?

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Feed The Birds

To make your winter bird-feeding campaign most successful it should be started now, if not already under way.

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It would be of interest to know about the birds around the homes of our club members, the kinds of birds, the numbers of them, the kind and number of bird homes and if they were used, also about your bird baths and feeding stands. Let the other members know about your problems and success with birds through your bulletin.

All of our members receive the bulletin and they are all asked to contribute to it.

Information regarding the work of the club and news of interest in the world of bird study and protection is needed.

Do Hawks Kill Birds

Ask the average hunter if hawks kill quails and he will answer promptly and positively in the affirmative, moreover, he will usually admit, or even boast that he tries to kill every hawk he sees, despite the fact that he cannot or will not differentiate between the several species of hawks and despite the fact that he knows nothing except hearsay about their feeding habits.

It is a long-standing tradition that hawks are inveterate enemies of mankind in general, and of hunters and farmers in particular. A hunter may find the mangled remains of a bobwhite, or a farmer sees a chicken carried off by a hawk, and because of the misdeeds of one hawk, the Cooper's, both hunters and farmers declare war on all hawks, and practically all hunters shoot all hawks on sight, although the chances are a hundred against one that any hawkshooting gunner ever saw a hawk killing a bird.

Dr. T.M. Brewer, co-author of one of the most important and reliable books ever written on American ornithology, states that he has never known the red-shouldered hawk to molest the poultry yard. Yet the red-shouldered is one of the two common hawks that every small boy and almost every gunner in the United States calls a chicken hawk.

It has now been over forty years since Dr. A.K. Fisher of the Biological Survey gave the results of stomach examinations of thousands of hawks. Nearly 2,500 stomachs of the beneficial species were examined, and Dr. Fisher found 65% contained mice, 27 per cent contained insects, and only $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent contained poultry or game birds. Dr. Fisher concludes his report with these words: "The relentless persecution of our birds of prey is not only unjust, but is extremely prejudicial to the

interests of the farmer, orchardist and sportsman. With the exception of four species, we may say that rapacious birds are among the most valuable birds that wage war against the fows of the agriculturist'.

Nearly twenty years after Dr. Fisher wrote his report, another Government biologist, A.H. Howell, said: "Perhaps the most maligned birds in the country are the hawks and owls. A deep-seated, though baseless prejudice against them has persisted to the present day; yet in reality nearly all of hawks and owls confer a decided benefit on the farmer by destroying field mice, rats and other rodents and insects".

The trouble is, we are all prone to hold a well-rooted opinion based upon what we see ourselves, and to take with a grain of salt what other men tell us regarding the other side of the case.

The thought should be kept in mind that the foregoing facts were obtained by trained investigators working with field-killed birds, taken from every section of the country and in every month of the year. These facts were not obtained by artificial trials with caged birds, but by the examination of over 50,000 stomachs. In presenting these facts there is no intention to claim that all hawks are wholly beneficial at all times in all communities.

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New Members

Boeschenstein, Caroline
4903 S. Broadway
Cullen, Helen 5737 Waterman Ave.
Falvey, Marcella
6708 Marquette Ave.
Gilsinn, Evelyn 925 Beach Ave.
Stertz, Rosa Lee 305 N. Broadway
Walsh, Kathleen
5017 Tennessee Ave.
Williams, Rhey 5840 Walsh Street
Neill, Julian Smithton, Illinois

Interesting Records

A Herring Gull 385626, banded July 2, 1925 at Mire Island, 8 miles east of St. James, Mich., by F. C. Lincoln, was caught on a fish hook about July 15, 1936 at South Manitou, Mich.

A number of Royal Terns banded in Charleston County, S. C., by E. Milby Burton, were recovered in The British West Indies, and Cuba.

Roseate Tern 711780, banded in August 1928 at Penikese Island, Mass., by Lawrence B. Fletcher, was trapped and released June 28 1935 at Tern Island, Chatham, Mass., by Dr. Oliver L. Astin.

A number of Brown Pelicans banded on Pelican Island, Mosquito Lagoon, Fla., by Edward M. Davus, in November 1934 and 1935 in the vicinity of Oriente, Cuba

Mallard 237653 banded February 23, 1924 at Union Springs, N.Y., by Douglas H. Beyeau, was killed November 1, 1935 at Attawapiskat Lake Ont., Canada.

Black Duck 496164, banded Mar. 10, 1927 at Oakedale, L.I., N.Y. by Alvah G. Allen, was caught in a muskrat trap during the spring of 1936 near Starks, Me.

Blue-winged Teal A549116, banded September 17, 1935 at the Nunakong State Park, Chippewa Company, Michigan, by H. D. Ruhl was shot April 26, 1936 between Guanica and Lojas, Puerto Rico.

Chimney Swift A73881, banded August 26, 1927 at Daytona Beach Florida, by R.J. Longstreet, was found dead about July 17, 1936, at Ormond Beach, Florida.

Blue Jay 212532, banded July 26, 1925 at Ann Arbor, Mich. by Mr. Almerin D. Tinker, was trapped and released February 6 1936 at Ann Arbor, by Irvin Jean Sturgis.

Birds Length of Life

How long most wild birds would live if they had a chance is an unsolved mystery. Very few of them live to the "ripe old age" they might if nothing happened to them.

Even though some of our birds are protected by law, they have many natural enemies. Others that escape their enemies die from lack of food, or from other cause, before they are very old

In some of the northern and western states hundreds of thousands of birds are burned every year in forest fires.

In their yearly migration flights to and from the Southland birds are likely to meet with serious accident. Sometimes in crossing large bodies of water, such as the Gulf of Mexico or the Caribbean Sea, they are overtaken by storms. When their feathers are soaked, they cannot fly; so many of them are beaten down to the waves and drowned.

Quite often, one storm will kill thousands of birds.

When they migrate, many birds rest and feed during the day and continue their journey during the night.

While flying in the darkness they are attracted by bright steady lights, and every year thousands dash themselves to death against lighthouses, high buildings, and tall lighted monuments.

Once in a while you will see a bird that looks as though it had braved hardships and escaped danger for quite a number of years. But real veterans are rare, indeed.

(H. Hankinson 11 st N.)